Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 29 January 2020

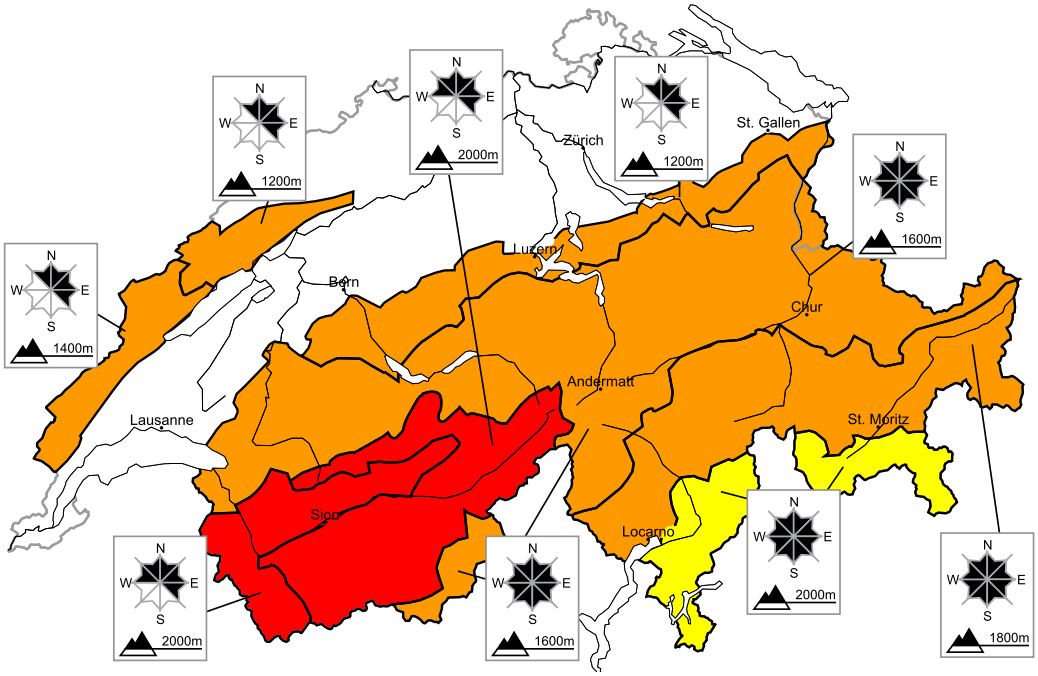
29.1.2020, 07:53

High avalanche danger will be encountered in some regions

Edition: 29.1.2020, 08:00 / Next update: 29.1.2020, 17:00

Avalanche danger

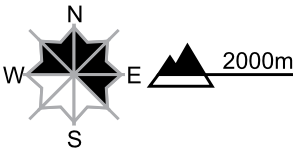
updated on 29.1.2020, 08:00



region A — Level 4, high

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

Much of the fresh and wind-drifted snow are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on north and east facing slopes. Natural avalanches are to be expected, even very large ones in isolated cases. Transportation routes situated at higher altitudes in particular are endangered in some cases.
The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes are very critical.

Danger levels 1 low | 2 moderate | 3 consider. | 4 high | 5 very high

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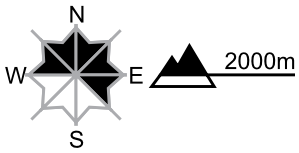
region B — Level 4, high

New snow

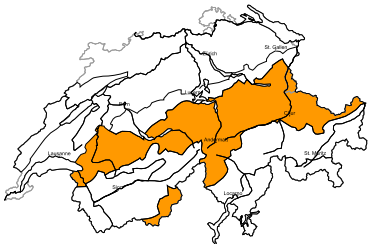
Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

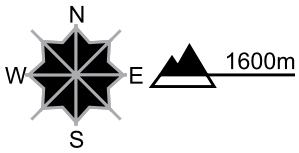
Much of the fresh and wind-drifted snow are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on north and east facing slopes. Avalanches can in many places be released very easily and reach large size. Natural avalanches are to be expected. The snow sport conditions outside marked and open pistes are very critical.
The danger exists primarily in alpine snow sports terrain. Avalanches capable of reaching valley bottoms and endangering exposed transportation routes are unlikely to occur.

region C — Level 3, considerable



New snow

Avalanche prone locations



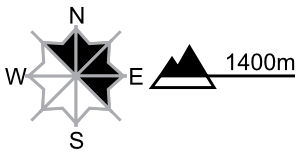
Danger description

Fresh snow and much of the wind-drifted snow are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on north and east facing slopes. Avalanches can be released, even by a single winter sport participant and reach large size. Natural avalanches are to be expected.
Snow sport activities outside marked and open pistes call for extensive experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and restraint.

region D — Level 3, considerable

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

As a consequence of fresh snow and a strong to storm force westerly wind, wind slabs will form. They are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on north and east facing slopes. Avalanches can in some places be released easily and reach dangerously large size.
Ski touring and snowshoe hiking call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger.

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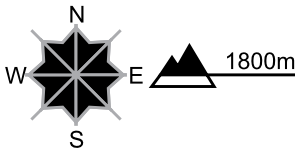
region E — Level 3, considerable

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



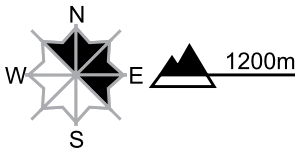
Danger description

The sometimes storm force wind will transport the fresh snow and, in some cases, old snow as well. The fresh snow and wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on north and east facing slopes. Avalanches can be released very easily. Whumpfing sounds and the formation of shooting cracks when stepping on the snowpack serve as an alarm indicating the danger. Avalanches can reach dangerously large size.
Backcountry touring calls for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region F — Level 3, considerable

New snow

Avalanche prone locations



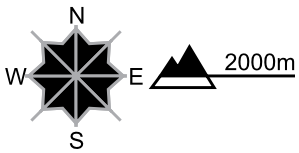
Danger description

The sometimes storm force wind will transport the fresh snow significantly. The wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on wind-protected shady slopes. They can be released, even by a single winter sport participant. Avalanches can reach medium size.
Backcountry touring and snowshoe hiking call for experience in the assessment of avalanche danger and careful route selection.

region G — Level 2, moderate

Wind slabs

Avalanche prone locations



Danger description

The sometimes storm force wind will transport the fresh snow and, in some cases, old snow as well. The wind slabs are lying on the unfavourable surface of an old snowpack in particular on wind-protected shady slopes. They can be released, even by a single winter sport participant, but they will be small in most cases.
The wind slabs are to be avoided in steep terrain.

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Snowpack and weather

updated on 28.1.2020, 17:00

Snowpack

Abundant snowfall over a wide area and very windy conditions will give rise to extensive snow drift accumulations. Before the current snowfall, on wind-protected slopes the upper layers of the snowpack were faceted and loosely bonded. In the inneralpine regions of both Valais and Grisons, the entire snowpack was in this condition in some cases. In addition, surface hoar had been covered with snow in some places. In all of these locations the old snowpack provides an extremely poor substrate for the fresh snow and wind slabs. In places that are exposed to the wind and on steep sunny slopes, in contrast, the surface of the snowpack was often rough and hard. Bonding with the fresh and drifted snow is more favourable here.

Observed weather on Tuesday, 28.01.2020

It was mostly very cloudy and snow fell over a wide area. In the afternoon the snowfall level dropped from 1400 m to low altitudes. In the afternoon there were some bright spells in southern Ticino and the Grisons southern valleys.

Fresh snow

The following amounts of snow fell in the period from Monday evening until Tuesday evening:

- Lower Valais in the extreme west and the north, Leuk, Lötschental: 30 to 50 cm
- Western Jura, Vaud and Fribourg Alps, western Bernese Oberland, rest of Valais, Gotthard region: 15 to 30 cm
- Other regions: 5 to 15 cm over a wide area, but only a few centimetres in Grisons

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: between -6 °C in the north and -4 °C in the south

Wind

Strong to storm force from the west

Weather forecast through Wednesday, 29.01.2020

It will be very cloudy and snow will fall, in large quantities in some cases, even at low altitudes. It will be fairly sunny only in the far south.

Fresh snow

From Tuesday afternoon until Wednesday afternoon the following amounts of snow will fall:

- Northern Alpine ridge, Vaud and Fribourg Alps, Valais, western Jura: 30 to 50 cm, but more in some localities in the extreme west of Lower Valais, northern Valais and the relevant regions of the eastern Bernese Oberland
- Other parts of the northern flank of the Alps and of the Gotthard region and northern Grisons, and in northern Lower Engadine and the eastern Jura: 20 to 30 cm
- Elsewhere: less than 20 cm, but remaining dry in Sotto Ceneri

Temperature

At midday at 2000 m: between -5 °C in the southwest and -7 °C in the northeast

Wind

Strong to storm force from the west to northwest, easing during the day

Avalanche bulletin for Wednesday, 29 January 2020

Outlook through Friday, 31.01.2020

Thursday

During the first half of the night the snowfall will cease in the east as well and the skies will clear everywhere. In the morning cloud will quickly build up again, and from the middle of the day precipitation will arrive from the west. In the north the snowfall level will rise to 2000 m.
As the precipitation ceases and the wind eases, the natural avalanche activity will decrease quickly on Wednesday night. For winter sport participants venturing off piste, however, the situation will remain critical over a wide area.

Friday

The precipitation will cease in the morning. During the day it will become increasingly sunny from the west.
As a consequence of rain, moist avalanches are to be expected during the night below approximately 2000 m, in particular in the north and west. The danger of dry avalanches will decrease a little.